

# VETERANS JOURNAL



PUBLISHED BY  
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*Winter 2009 Issue*

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The information in this journal is being provided to make the veteran community aware of some current events, activities and veterans issues that are of mutual concern. From time to time, we will include some relevant information important enough to be repeated to insure that veterans and their families are aware of the full range of benefits and entitlements available to them.



## **Franklin County VSC giving out Gift cards for Christmas.**

The Franklin County Veterans Service Commission is sponsoring a \$50.00 Kroger Gift Card program for the Christmas Holidays. We will issue cards during regular business hours starting December 7-24, 2009. This program is available to eligible veterans, widows or widowers of a veteran. The only requirements are that you be a veteran residing in Franklin County and meet the income guidelines which were set at 250% of the Federal poverty level.

## ***It's official, DD-214's can now be requested online.***

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to request their DD-214's online:  
<http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>

This may be particularly helpful when a veteran needs a copy of his/her DD-214 for employment purposes. NPRC is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still

complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site. Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized. The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records centers mail room and processing time.



## Operation Holiday Cheer 2009



**December**  
**Monday 21st Winter**  
**Begins**  
**Friday 25<sup>th</sup> Christmas**



**January**  
**Friday 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**New Year's**  
**Day**

**Monday**  
**18th**  
**Martin**  
**Luther King,**  
**Jr. Day**



**February**  
**Monday 15th President's**  
**Day**

Place: Veterans Memorial  
Date: December 16, 2009  
Time: 4 pm – 8 pm  
Who: Santa Claus will be there to give a FREE picture with Santa to all Military and Veteran families!

**Problem:** Tough economical times have made life extremely difficult for members of the military and Veteran community; especially during this upcoming holiday season. Many families can't even afford to have a professional picture taken with Santa Claus or purchase toys or gifts for their loved ones.

**Goal:** It's been written one joy dispels a thousand worries. Take this opportunity to bring some holiday cheer to those warriors, Veterans, and their families who are less fortunate.

Whether you or your organization wishes to **GIVE** or you're a family who needs to **RECEIVE**, this will be an event for you. We can add one more element to it: **VOLUNTEER**.

So many have asked me how they can give back and where to start, well here's the chance to hook up with the organizations who do the giving. Here's our chance to lead by example while demonstrating our social responsibility and encouraging everyone to get into the spirit of giving. Whether its information, volunteer time, toys, gifts etc...

More to come....more to come.

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## ANNOUNCES NEW INITIATIVE TO FAST- TRACK BENEFITS FOR VETERANS WITH DISABILITIES

*In Advance of Veterans' Day,  
Brown Discusses Issues  
Affecting Ohio Veterans*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown today announced a new initiative to improve veterans access to the benefits they have earned. Brown's Benefit Rating Acceleration for Veteran Entitlements (BRAVE) Act would create a new fast-track system for veterans with disabilities to qualify for benefits from both the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Social Security Administration (SSA).

"Honoring our nation's veterans means fulfilling our promise to them," Brown said. "Veterans in Ohio and across the country must receive benefits in a manner befitting their service. I'm introducing the BRAVE Act to streamline the disability claims process and to ensure our veterans have access to the full benefits they have earned."

While the SSA and VA use nearly identical definitions of disability, veterans must apply separately to qualify for benefits based on disability. The Dole-Shalala Commission reported, however, that only 61 percent of veterans across the nation who are granted individual unemployability and only 54 percent of those rated 100 percent by VA also receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Ohio has one of the longest wait times for SSDI in the country with processing times averaging 621 days.

Brown's BRAVE Act would eliminate the repetitive and often lengthy eligibility process disabled veterans must undergo to receive full benefits from the VA and Social Security. The BRAVE Act would require the SSA to accept eligibility

**Continued from page 2: ANNOUNCES  
NEW INITIATIVE TO FAST-TRACK  
BENEFITS FOR VETERANS WITH  
DISABILITIES**

requirements for any veteran who qualifies under the VA guidelines. Veterans who receive compensation from the VA would be fast-tracked in disability benefits processing by SSA. Brown's BRAVE Act has received support from the Paralyzed Veterans Association (PVA). To view the PVA's letter to the Senator, please click: [HERE](#)

Following the call, Brown released a [county-by-county report](#) detailing the number of Ohio veterans receiving VA benefits. In Ohio, more than 122,000 veterans and survivors currently receive disability compensation.

Brown is a member of the U.S. Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. He recently attended the White House bill signing ceremony for the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act, which guarantees timely funding for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) so it can continue to improve the medical care it provides to our nation's veterans. Brown is also the author of two legislative initiatives, the Veterans Education Tuition Support (VETS) Act of 2009 and the Wounded Veteran Job Security Act, which would strengthen our nation's commitment to veterans by improving education reimbursements and expanding employment protection for former service members.

**DEPARTMENT OF  
VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Veterans Benefits  
Administration  
Washington, DC 20420**

August 24, 2009

Director (00/28)

All VA Regional Offices

**SUBJ: Cost of Living Adjustment  
to Chapter 31 Subsistence  
Allowance Rates**

On October 1, 2009, a 1.2 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) to Chapter 31 subsistence allowance rates will go into effect. This letter provides information on:

- The new rates and the first increased payment date
- How running Chapter 31 awards will be adjusted
- How veterans will be notified about the increase
- Who to contact for questions

**The new rates and the first  
increased payment date**

The enclosed table reflects the new Chapter 31 subsistence allowance rates that go into effect on October 1, 2009. Since VA pays subsistence allowance for training completed in the previous month, the first payment at these rates will be reflected in the November 1, 2009 disbursement.

Starting Tuesday, September 1, 2009, every Chapter 31 subsistence allowance award processed will automatically reflect the new rates, if the award includes an effective date of October 1, 2009, or later.

**How running Chapter 31 awards  
will be adjusted**

In early October, a batch computer program will identify and automatically adjust running awards that include an effective date of October 1, 2009, or earlier.



**New VA Website**

Same name; new face! On Veterans Day, VA rolled out the first phase of a large-scale Web renovation to better serve America's Veterans. This is the first and most visible step of changing VA's Web domain to better serve Veterans and their families by making it easier for them to find the information they need about benefits and programs. Long term, VA goals for its Web presence are to make it easier and more inviting for Veterans by focusing on topics and tasks rather than office functions, improving the navigational structure to ensure consistency, and making it more visually appealing. The new Web site design will cover more than 500 VA Web sites and about 80,000 pages. Major changes include improvements in the navigational structure that provide consistency among all sites and consolidate major topics; a slide show section that showcases current VA events or hot topics; and bottom columns that feature news items, highlights and a "Quick List" with links directly to important applications such as Veterans On Line Applications (VONAPP) and MyHealtheVet.

**Season's Greetings  
and Best Wishes For  
a Safe and Happy  
Holiday!**



## Senate Passes Veterans Caregivers Assistance Bill

On Thursday, the Senate passed, the Caregiver and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act, by a vote of 98-0. To put this in perspective, this is the bill that Sen. Coburn (R-OK) was reported to have put a hold on. Senator Coburn repeatedly stated that he was not against the bill but wanted to make sure it was paid for. Prior to the bill being passed, Sen. Coburn offered an amendment, which would have taken money from State Department accounts for the United Nations in the amount of \$3.5 billion dollars. The amendment was defeated. Senator Coburn never opposed the underlying bill as the final tally shows his favorable vote. The bill will now go to a conference committee to iron out the differences with a closely similar House passed bill.

## House Passes Bill to Fix Medicare Doctor Payment Rates

The House passed Thursday a bill that would stop a scheduled cut in Medicare physician payment rates scheduled for January. The House passed bill also would restructure the formula used to determine doctor payment under the federal healthcare program.

The Medicare Physician Payment Reform Act, HR 3961, would block a scheduled 21 percent physician payment cut required by a 1997 formula originally designed to control costs. The flawed formula, which NAUS has fought for years to replace, has repeatedly been adjusted by Congress to maintain

the acceptable payment rates for medical care under Medicare.

With House passage, the bill now moves to the Senate, which has yet to act on similar legislation. And as readers know, payment rates for patient treatment under TRICARE For Life are intrinsically tied to the rate paid under Medicare. Therefore, unless Congress intervenes to prevent these scheduled cuts from occurring, the healthcare benefits earned by retired military will be unprotected. NAUS continues its work to fix the flawed formula.



## More Veterans in Government

On Monday, President Barack Obama signed an executive order aimed at hiring more veterans to work in the federal government.

Under the executive order, twenty-three Cabinet level and lower departments and agencies will band together to form the Council on Veterans Employment. The main purposes of the Council will be to advise and assist the President and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management in establishing a coordinated Government-wide effort to increase the number of veterans employed by the Federal Government. They will advise on how to enhance recruitment and training; serve as a national forum for promoting veterans employment opportunities and establish performance measures to assess the effectiveness of the Council.

## Congress Stops TRICARE Standard Fee Hike

Springfield, Virginia (10/07/09) – Just days after a surprise announcement that the Defense Department was raising TRICARE

Standard hospital inpatient co-payments by \$110 per day (more than 20 percent) for retired servicemembers (under age 65), and under a howl of protests from the National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS) and other organizations in The Military Coalition and the National Military and Veterans Alliance, Congress included a provision in the Conference Report for the FY2010 National Defense Authorization Act (HR 2647) prohibiting the increase. It is anticipated that the Senate will vote on the conference report soon, with consideration by the House to follow.

Immediately following the announcement last week, NAUS President Bill Matz, MG, USA (Ret), sent a letter protesting the TRICARE fee hike to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and expressed his outrage in a telephone call to the White House. "Both the President and DoD had made it clear months ago that there would be no TRICARE fee increases at all in FY2010," Matz said. "And Congress, along with the rest of us, took them at their word."

"I'm pleased that Congress stepped in and ensured this promise was kept. But it shouldn't have had to come this far," he added.



## Department of Defense to implement retroactive stop loss special pay

Active, reserve and former service members affected by stop loss are eligible for retroactive special pay if they served on active duty between Sept 11, 2001 and Sept 30, 2009.

Service members can submit their claim for retroactive stop loss special pay from now until Oct. 21, 2010. Eligible personnel will receive \$500 per month for each month that they were retained on active duty because of stop loss. <http://www.defenselink.mil/releases/release.aspx?releaseid=13063>



## Preparations Continue for Moving Enemy Detainees into U.S.

On Tuesday, the Senate thwarted, on a mostly party-line vote, 43 to 57, an effort to block spending to upgrade facilities in the United States for prisoners from Guantanamo, a proposal that Illinois officials feared could have complicated efforts to place detainees at a prison in their State.

Sen. James M. Inhofe (R-OK) proposed the restriction as an amendment to a spending bill for military construction and veterans programs. The amendment would have stopped the transfer of prisoners from Guantanamo Bay to American soil. During debate Inhofe told Senators, "If you want terrorists here, then vote against this amendment."

But Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, contended that the amendment would "actually make us less secure by restricting our ability to improve security at facilities" housing detainees who are sent to the United States for trial.

NAUS notes that in May the Senate voted 90 to 6 to bar funds for the transfer of enemy combatants to the United States. But the strength of that position is weakening as seen in Tuesday's vote.

One of the reasons for the dramatic change of mind, according to Senate Majority Whip Richard J. Durbin, D-Ill., besides, of course, not listening to the American public, is the backing of the change from the Administration. Durbin specifically cited a letter on the matter from Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano.

Prior to the vote Administration officials wrote members of the Senate, "Like the President and numerous others, both Republicans and Democrats, we are convinced that closing the Guantanamo Bay detention center is in the national security interests of the United States."

While not addressing the potential for Islamist militant recruitment using the courtroom trials and prisons on United States soil and the heightened media attention, the officials blindly said the state-of-art prison facility at Guantanamo should be closed because, "Al Qaeda has repeatedly used the existence of the facility as a recruitment tool."

One observer was heard to say, "Apparently there is money for holding trials, building prisons and closing others, but funding for the extension of concurrent receipt and the repeal of SBP/DIC reductions goes begging."



## VA Health Care Funding Reform Major Victory for Veterans

October 22, 2009

WASHINGTON, Oct. 22 - The Disabled American Veterans (DAV) today applauds President Obama for signing the Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act, calling it "the most significant legislative victory for veterans in a generation."

"This is a great, historic day for all veterans and their families," said DAV National Commander Roberto "Bobby" Barrera, who was at the signing ceremony in the White House. "Veterans, families, survivors and everyone else who cares about the plight of veterans

can rejoice knowing that for the first time ever, the Department of Veterans Affairs' health care system can be assured it will be funded on time and adequately every year."

"We have worked for this for more than two decades as veterans suffered. Approval of advance appropriations is the most significant legislative victory for veterans in a generation," he said. "This legislation will help ensure timely access to medical care for the men and women who have served, are serving and will serve in defense of our nation."

"This long overdue legislation will make a difference for every disabled veteran and every future disabled veteran," said Commander Barrera. "This victory flows from the effective collaboration by veterans organizations in the Partnership for Veterans Health Care Budget Reform, The Military Coalition and a dedicated group of former VA officials who joined our cause. Most important, this is happening because veterans across the country, including so many DAV members and supporters, stepped up and called on Congress to put an end to chronic funding lapses occurring for decades. Together, we stood up for veterans, and veterans and their families are going to benefit."

"This historic legislation will ensure an uninterrupted, predictable flow of funds for veterans health care programs even if Congress is unable to complete work on the rest of the federal budget by the start of a fiscal year," said DAV National Adjutant Arthur H. Wilson. "With funding assured, VA hospital and clinic directors will no longer have to delay the hiring of new doctors or nurses, or the purchase of new medical equipment, due to Congress' failure to approve a budget on time; something that has occurred in 20 of the past 23 years, including this year. With advance appropriations in place, VA officials will be able to plan ahead how best to provide veterans with the medical care they have earned: when and where they need it."

The Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act authorizes Congress to approve veterans medical care funding one year in advance to better meet the anticipated demand for veterans health care services. The advanced funding will give the Department of Veterans Affairs up to a full year to plan for the most effective and efficient way of delivering medical care. Additionally, this now requires the Government Accountability Office to audit the budget development process to ensure that sufficient funds are included.

The 1.2 million-member Disabled American Veterans, a non-profit organization founded in 1920 and chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1932 represents this nation's disabled veterans. It is dedicated to a single purpose: building better lives for our nation's disabled veterans and their families. More information is available at [www.dav.org](http://www.dav.org).



## VA to make it easier for vets to qualify for combat stress compensation

WASHINGTON (AP) - Female soldiers and others serving in dangerous roles behind the front lines in Iraq and Afghanistan have long complained it was hard to

prove their combat experience when applying for disability for post-traumatic stress disorder.

That could soon change.

The Veterans Affairs Department has proposed reducing the paperwork required for veterans to show their experience caused combat-related stress. Even just the fear of hostile action would be sufficient, as long as a VA psychologist or psychiatrist agreed.

The VA says the change would streamline claims and recognize the "inherently stressful nature" of war service. The agency is accepting comment until Oct. 23.

Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki told lawmakers on Wednesday he's committed to improving trust in the claims process between veterans and the VA, and to helping veterans receive benefits they are entitled to.

"We will change the culture," Shinseki said. "I will assure you of that."

Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., called it a significant shift in policy.

"Before, and for a long time, I've been fighting many times over for the VA not to discourage people from saying they have PTSD," said Murray, who serves on the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee. "We've have many cases where veterans were told it's all in your head."

Post-traumatic stress disorder can affect anyone who is traumatized by an experience. From the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, more than 134,000 veterans have sought help at a VA facility for possible PTSD, the VA says. The symptoms include flashbacks and anxiety, and for some, it's so debilitating that it makes it difficult to work after they leave the military.

While praising the VA's effort, veterans service organizations have questioned the requirement for a VA psychologist or psychiatrist to agree the experience caused the disorder. Rep. John Hall, D-N.Y., who chairs a subcommittee with oversight over

the disability claims system, said he's concerned that the proposed rule isn't comprehensive enough.

The debate is a reflection of the changing battlefield.

A World War II-era law established that veterans who "engaged in combat with the enemy" receive special treatment when they seek disability compensation, so it's less burdensome to prove an injury was from war service.

Troops from an infantry or special forces unit are awarded a badge that makes it easier to prove they engaged in combat.

Truck drivers, cooks and others in support roles aren't eligible for the badge but can use other types of documentation or medals, such as a Purple Heart, to prove they were in combat.

But veterans and service organizations that work with them have said doing so is often incredibly difficult, in part because of the lack of paperwork kept by many units. About half of all post-traumatic stress disability claims filed by veterans are denied - with the majority of denials coming because the veteran lacks sufficient documentation, the VA has said.

The VA said it does not have an estimate of the number of veterans who would likely fall under the policy change, nor does it have a cost estimate.

In 2008, a Congressional Budget Office estimate, on legislation that would have made a similar change, concluded it would cost billions over a nine-year period. Based on 2006 figures, it said the average payout for a PTSD claim was \$543 a month.

Natalie MacLeod, 51, a mother of five from Lowell, Mass., who served in Iraq is among the veterans hopeful that the proposed rule change will help her. She said she's been denied PTSD disability benefits because of a lack of documentation, even though she's been diagnosed with PTSD.

"The VA will diagnose you with the PTSD and then the VA will turn you down, which is what I'm fighting right now," said MacLeod, who said she was a cook and did administrative work for her Army Reserves unit.

At a hearing last week on the issue, representatives from veterans service organizations testified that many veterans go to private mental health providers for treatment. They said the law requires the VA to consider private medical evidence when considering claims, and asked the VA to allow that in these types of cases.

Hall said he thinks that in addition to fear, if veterans could show feelings of helplessness or horror while at war caused their PTSD, they should also be eligible under the new rule.

Bradley G. Mayes, director of compensation and pension service at the Veterans Benefits Administration, who attended the hearing, said the VA is considering all meaningful comments.



## **Senator Murray Introduces New Bill to Help More Veterans with Multiple Sclerosis**

**Murray's Bill Addresses the High  
Rate of MS Among Veterans;  
Wins Endorsement of MSVETS and  
National Gulf War Resource Center**

### **Murray's Legislation Lifts the VA's Arbitrary 7-year Limit to Qualify for Automatic VA Benefits**

(Washington, D.C.) – Today, U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-Wash) introduced new legislation to help more veterans who have Multiple Sclerosis (MS) qualify for disability benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). A growing number of veterans from the first Gulf War are now developing symptoms of MS, but they often face an uphill battle in obtaining disability benefits from the VA.

"Too many veterans with MS are having trouble getting the care and the benefits they deserve," Murray said. "These men and women served our nation bravely, and they should not be denied care because of arbitrary rules. My bill will ensure that veterans get the care they have earned no matter when their symptoms emerge. It will provide relief for veterans of the first Gulf War and will ensure adequate care for current service members who may develop MS in the future."

Under current law, veterans have seven years after being honorably discharged to connect their MS to their military service. Unfortunately, many veterans don't develop the symptoms of MS until after seven years, making them ineligible for automatic disability benefits from the Veterans Administration. These veterans must then go through a lengthy appeals process to prove that their disability is service-connected.

Senator Murray's bill is supported by a number of organizations that represent veterans with MS, including the National Gulf War Resource Center (NGWRC) and MS Vets.

"Senator Murray's bill validates the significant health care crisis of veterans who served our nation during the Persian Gulf War," said Julie Mock, President of NGWRC and a veteran of the first Gulf War who has MS. "Approximately 500 Persian Gulf War veterans have

been diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis with service connections presumably related to exposures received during the Gulf War. Many more veterans are suffering the debilitating symptoms of MS but have yet to have their illnesses properly diagnosed with appropriate and necessary medical tests."

"All of us at MSVETS would like to thank Senator Murray for introducing the MS Bill," said Ed Butler, co-founder of MSVETS and a board member of NGWRC. "We applaud her efforts to bring much needed relief and compensation to hundreds of Gulf War Veterans and their families that have fallen through the cracks of the VA's seven year presumptive rule for service connecting Multiple Sclerosis."

In September 2005, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported that, "of the 700,000 U.S. troops who served [in Iraq] in 1991, a disproportionate number experienced serious neurological disorders." Whereas nationally, 1 in 700 people suffers from MS (.1%), the Post-Intelligencer reports that 3 in 36 (8%) soldiers who served near Julie Mock's battalion in Iraq have been diagnosed with MS, and one is suffering from an undiagnosed condition.

### **Background information on veterans benefits, MS, and Senator Murray's bill, follows:**

#### **WHAT DOES SENATOR MURRAY'S BILL DO?**

The bill would remove the seven-year limitation for veterans trying to gain service-connected status for their multiple sclerosis. This legislation would ensure that a person diagnosed seven years and one day after their honorable discharge from the U.S. military will still get access to the VA treatment they need. Some veterans with MS have difficulty receiving care since the MS is not seen as service related. Veterans with MS should not be penalized because their symptoms were diagnosed more than 7 years after separation. Scientists aren't 100% certain



whether exposure to combat stress, experimental vaccines, toxins released from oil-well fires, sarin from the destruction of weapons caches, pesticides, pyridostigmine bromide pills (to protect against nerve gas), or some combination of any of these causes Multiple Sclerosis. There is a general consensus that MS is higher among Gulf War veterans than the general population. This bill will help veterans access the care they need by making MS a presumptive disability, no matter when its symptoms emerge.

#### **WHAT IS A PRESUMPTIVE DISABILITY?**

Sometimes veterans return from military service with physical and mental conditions that the VA presumes are linked to military service. This means that science hasn't been able to connect a disease with service without a doubt, but there is sound scientific evidence that suggests there is a connection between exposures veterans experienced and a disease they developed later. The VA recognizes 41 chronic diseases for service-connected benefits, and Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is one of those diseases – but only for 7 years after a veterans separated from service. This means that a veteran diagnosed with MS after the seven year window, has to prove their multiple sclerosis was directly connected to their service. Presumptive service connection is important to our veterans because it helps them qualify for the benefits they deserve so they can get appropriate treatment through the VA's medical system.

#### **WHAT DOES SCIENCE SAY?**

Multiple Sclerosis is a chronic neurological disease with symptoms ranging from clumsiness to blindness to numbness. The problem with the seven year limit for Multiple Sclerosis is that a person with MS may not show symptoms for years even though they have the

disease. According to the VA's MS Center of Excellence, "there is considerable evidence that MS precedes symptoms in most patients. Most patients with MS have several lesions [shown on an] MRI at the time of their first symptom."

#### **WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF AFFECTED VETERANS?**

Approximately 700,000 U.S. service members were deployed to the Persian Gulf during the 1991 Gulf War. According to a 2000 VA study, Gulf veterans report being not as healthy as their military peers who were not deployed in the Persian Gulf. A September 2005 Seattle Post-Intelligencer article reported that, "of the 700,000 U.S. troops who served there in 1991, a disproportionate number experienced serious neurological disorders. More than 65 percent have sought health care for service-related ailments. Nearly 200,000 are receiving disability compensation -- twice the rate as vets from World War II, Korea and Vietnam." Numbers of Persian Gulf War veterans diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis range, but according to the National Gulf War Resource Center, "the rate of multiple sclerosis is rising among Gulf War veterans."



### ***It's Christmas Time***

*by Bob Lazzar-Atwood.*

Put your problems on probation  
Run your troubles off the track,  
Throw your worries out the  
window  
Get the monkeys off your back.  
Silence all your inner critics  
With your conscience make  
amends,  
And allow yourself some  
happiness  
It's Christmas time again!  
Call a truce with those who  
bother you  
Let all the fighting cease,  
Give your differences a breather  
And declare a time of peace,  
Don't let angry feelings taint  
The precious time you have to  
spend,  
And allow yourself some  
happiness  
It's Christmas time again!  
Like some cool refreshing water  
Or a gentle summer breeze,  
Like a fresh bouquet of flowers  
Or the smell of autumn leaves,  
It's a banquet for the spirit  
Filled with family, food and  
friends,  
So allow yourself some  
happiness  
It's Christmas time again!

